

1352

THE
SHEEP-SHEARING:

O R,

H. Shakespeare

FLORIZEL *and* PERDITA.

A PASTORAL

COMEDY.

Taken from SHAKESPEAR.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL in *Dublin.*

The SONGS set by Mr. ARNE.

D U B L I N :

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M D C C L X V I I .

1325

STEEP-SHEARING



PROLOGUE.

Spoke by Mr. BARRY.

*T*O raise the honour of the British stage
And swell the glories of ELIZA'S age,
Great SHAKESPEAR came, indu'd with ev'ry art
To fire with rage, with pity melt the heart:
An early contract nature with him seal'd,
And, to her fav'rite, all her charms reveal'd:
Alike his skill, to paint the hero's woe,
Or bid the virgin's softer sorrows flow.
To draw young HARRY in the fields of FRANCE:
Or Shepherds gambols in the rural dance.

*The clown's coarse jests, the fortunes of a maid,
Whom nature's simple elegance array'd;
Princess, and milkmaid, and a prince's bride,
A subject for his WINTER'S TALE supply'd;
In which, the master-poet has inwove
The virgin innocence of past'ral love.*

*At ev'ry feast, to crown the rich repast,
The choicest fruits are always serv'd the last:
Stage cooks, indeed, reverse the bill of fare,
And ribaldry and farce bring up the rear.*

*But for such guests as you, in whom we find
Judgment so clear, and taste so well refin'd,
A treat more delicate we wish to lay,
And SHAKESPEAR'S wit shall send you pleas'd away.*

Dramatis Personæ.

MEN.

POLLIXENES, King of *Bithynia*.

FLORIZEL, the Prince, his Son.

CAMILLO, a *Sicilian* Lord, in Banishment.

ANTIGONUS, a *Sicilian* Lord, disguised as an old Shepherd, under the Name of ALCON.

AUTOLICUS, an arch Pedlar.

Clown.

PAN

Priest.

WOMEN.

PERDITA, supposed Daughter to ALCON.

DORCAS.

MOPSA.

Shepherds, Shepherdesses, Singers, and Dancers.

SCENE, *BITHYNIA*.



THE
SHEEP-SHEARING.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The KING and CAMILLO.

CAMILLO.

TIS now full sixteen years, that I have been
An outcast, banish'd man; and though
I've found,
Thro' your good grace, a home more hos-
pitable

Here in *Bithynia*, still I'd wish to lay
My wearied bones within the bosom of
My mother-earth, *Sicilia*.

King. I prithee, good *Camillo*, don't request it;
You still shall tarry here to share our love.

Cam. Ah! my good lord, *Leontes*
Hath long repented of his tyrant deeds,
Which, thro' ill-grounded jealousy, defam'd

His virtuous queen, and gave his little babe
(Most truly his) a prey to rav'ning wolves.

King. Unhappy man !

Cam. But see the vengeance of the gods ! *Antigonus,*
Who undertook t'expose the harmless infant,
Most justly perish'd with it.—Now the king,
Too late convinc'd, and childless in his age,
Retires, in cloister'd solitude to waste
The weary remnant of his life in tears ;
And wills me come to share the toils of state,
For him too much already sunk with woe.

King. But, as thou lov'st me, do not leave me now,
When most we need thy friendship ; for thou know'st
How much prince *Florizel*, my son, afflicts me
With the strange courses he of late hath follow'd.
We oft have wonder'd whence arose the change
So visible in thoughts, words, looks, and actions ;
Whence blew the sighs, like mildew blasts, to fade
The roses *Hebe* shed upon his cheek ;
Whence came that irksomeness of ev'ry joy
Our court affords, and ev'ry beauty there ;
Whence, for whole weeks, wou'd he withdraw himself,
Sequester'd, unattended, from the ken
Of ev'ry curious eye ; whence that he shut
Out ev'ry friend, that once lodg'd in his heart,
Left he should know the secret brooding there.

Cam. I oft have thought it strange.

King. But little thinks he
That kings have eyes, piercing as those of *Lynceus*,
Whose ray can penetrate the very center.
His ways are now no longer secret to me ;
I've haunted him through all his darkest haunts,
Till, in his kennel, I have earth'd the cub.
Degen'rate boy ! to mingle with the mud.

Cam. What means my lord ?

King. My good *Camillo*, trust me,
I've had intelligence, the Time he steals
From us, from study, and from manly feats,
And exercise of arms, is buried all
Beneath an aged shepherd's sordid roof,
Whose bleating flocks spread o'er that beauteous vale
That

That winds along the river side. A stranger,
Here settled in *Bithynia* some few years,
Who yet, beyond th' imagination rose
Of all his neighbours, yea from very nothing,
To large possessions, and unnumber'd flocks.

Cam. I've heard of such a man, who hath a daughter
Of note most rare, beyond her low estate.

King. Ay, that's the angle plucks him to his ruin.
Fool! to be caught with such a paltry bait!
A woman's bait!—I could have patience with him,
Meant he to sport it with the am'rous wench,
And had he thriv'd, and, from the wholesome theft,
Had bred a mungril hardy as its dam,
I cou'd have kiss'd the sturdy bastard, I,
As he trudg'd barefoot o'er the mountain's brow;
Or smil'd to see his princely fire break forth,
In lording it above the village brats;—
But, O *Camillo*! where shall I find patience?—
Thou'lt not believe me should I swear it true—
My son, prince *Florizel*, *Bithynia*'s hopes,
My kingdom's heir, this very day intends
To wed the daughter of that base-born clown.

Cam. It can't be true—It is impossible.
A prince to wed a peasant!

King. 'Tis most certain.
But to confound him past all contradiction,
We mean, at once, to prove and to prevent it.
To-day old *Alcon* (that's her father's name)
Holds an accustom'd rite, sacred to *Pan*,
The god of flocks; it is their shearer's feast,
At which he means to solemnize the nuptials
With rural pomp, and pastoral festivity.
But I shall disconcert them. I'll thither,
And thou *Camillo*, shall attend me too,
Disguis'd like strangers chance had summon'd there.

Cam. You may dispose me as your grace shall list.
Yet still, I think, the prince, in your report,
Is much abus'd—I can not think it true.

King. I'll think as thou, till I have prov'd the fact.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

SCENE, *A rural prospect near ALCON's house.*

FLORIZEL and PERDITA *sitting under a shady tree.*

Flor. These your unusual weeds, to each part of you:
Do give a life ; no sheperdes, but *Flora*
Peering in *April's* front. This, your sheep-shearing,
Is as meeting of the petty gods,
And you the queen of it.

Perd. My gracious lord, to chide at your extremes,
It not becomes me : O ! pardon, that I name them !
Your high-self, the kingdom's rising hope,
You have obscur'd with a swain's wearing ;
And me poor humble maid, most goddess-like
Prank'd up.

Flor. I blest the time, when my good falcon:
Took her flight across thy father's grounds ;
Celestial guide, to where my treasure lay.

Perd. Now *Jove* afford you cause ! To me, the difference.

Forges dread ; your greatness hath not been us'd
To fear ; ev'n now I tremble to think your
Father, by some accident, should pass this way,
As you did : O ! the fates ! how would he look
To see his work, so noble, vilely bound up :
What would he say ? or how should I, in these
My borrow'd flaunts, behold the sternness of his presence ?

Flor. Apprehend nothing but jollity. The gods
Themselves, humbling their deities to love,
Have taken the shapes of beasts upon them.
Jupiter became a bull ; and bellowed :
The green *Neptune* a ram, and bleated : And
The fire rob'd god, golden *Apollo*,
A poor humble swain, as I seem now. Their
Transformations were never for a piece
Of beauty rarer, nor in a way so chaste ;
Since my wishes run not before my honour,
Nor my desires burn hotter than my faith.
'Tis our bridal day ! Th' assembled gods,
This day, show'r roses down, to deck thy virgin couch !
And love shall lend the down of his soft wings,

To

To smooth thy pillow with eternal joys !
 Speak to me, love, and charm me with thy voice.

Perd. No, let me only answer you with blushes :
 If I should speak, you'd think I were too fond ;
 My tongue's ashamed t'interpret for my heart.

Flor. Hence with reserve ; it is a foe to love —
 What you tell me is whisper'd to yourself.
 Virtue and love may harmless sport together,
 Like little lambs that wanton on the plain ;
 While, like a faithful pastor by their side,
 Honour keeps off each ravenous desire.

Perd. I think you love me, and I think there is
 Such virtue shines about you, that I dare
 Intrust mine honour to your faithful love.
 Oft, oft, I wish thou wert some peasant swain,
 Born lowly as myself ; then should we live
 Unknown, unenvied in our humble state,
 Content with love beneath the cottage straw.

Flor. By heav'n ! there's such a charm in all thy words,
 I wish I were just what you'd have me be,
 Distinguish'd only from the rest by love.
 But, dearest *Perdita*, with these forc'd thoughts
 I pray thee darken not this day of mirth ;
 For, trust me, love, I'll be for ever thine ;
 For I cannot be

Mine own, nor any thing to any, if
 I be not thine : To this I am most constant,
 Though destiny say no.—Be merry, gentle,
 The guests are come ; let's in and entertain
 Them cheerily, nor think of aught but jollity and love.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE.

SCENE, *The Country.*

Enter the KING and CAMILLO habited like old yeomen.

King. I am certain it cannot be far off, though we have lost our way. Who have we here? We'll ask this merry fellow.

Enter AUTOLICUS singing.

Aut. *When daffodils begin to peere,
With hey the doxy over the dale,
Why then comes in the sweet o' th' year;
For the red blood reigns o'er the winter's pale.*

King. What! hollo! master songster!

Aut. Want you me, my masters? I've got the rarest ballads——

King. Which is the shortest way——

Aut. The shortest way is to hear it out, and then judge for yourselves.

Sings.

*The lark that tirra lyrā chaunts,
With hey, with hey, the thrush and the jay,
Are summer songs for me and my aunts,
As we lie tumbling in the hay.*

King. Why, fellow!——

Aut. Fellow! fellow quoth-a! who made you and I fellows? Do you know who you speak to, sir?

King. No, truly.

Aut. I thought so by your manners. I'd have you to know, sir, I have been at court, sir; and have seen the king, sir.

King. I cry you mercy. I did not know you had been so great a man. And pray how do you like him?

Aut. Why, hum! but so, so; so, so: And yet he's well enough too; but that he wants it here a little. He's not the wisest man in the world; but a damn'd merry fellow for all that, and an excellent companion.

King.

King. Then you and he have been acquainted.

Aut. As great as cup and can, fir. Lord, lord, I shall never forget the day that I and he—ha ha ha! 'Twou'd make you die with laughing to see the old woman fouse the king with a pail of suds—ha ha ha! I never spent such a day—But I'll sing you a song the king made up-on that very occasion.

*The white sheet bleaching o'er the hedge,
With hey the sweet birds! oh! how they sing!
Doth see my prugging tooth an edge;
For a pot of ale is a dish for a king.*

King. Did the king make this?

Aut. I help'd him a little; for, as I said, he is somewhat dull. He finish'd the three first lines, and was damnably set for a rhyme for sing; when I takes up the pot, and, slapping him on the back, hit off at once,

For a pot of ale's a dish for a king.

But to see how he look'd when he found I had drank it all off, ha ha ha! I shall never forget it, were I to live a thousand years: But we had t'other pot, and then composed t'other song upon this same wash-woman's fair daughter: You shall hear that too, hem, hem!

Sings.

*The linen, by her fingers prest,
Convey'd love's poison to my breast;
My heart grew hot, I felt the hurt,
I die, like Herc'les, by a skirt;
Cupid, to wound, took neither bow nor dart;
But with her smoothing-iron fir'd my heart.*

Oh! the king's a rare poet with a little of my help—The king and I had a hot dispute about the fourth line:

'I die, like Herc'les, by a skirt.'

He said it was a good comparizement for a king; but would not do for a pedlar: Whereof I look'd four, and ask'd,

ask'd, why so pray? Because, said he, few pedlars die worth a shirt. There he had me on the hip, and we both laugh'd so heartily, that I was obliged to drink off the rest of the beer, or I should have burst. In troth, he's a good-humour'd man, and a pretty poet to my thinking. Come, you must buy it.

King. Nay, since 'tis the kings poetry, 'tis fit all his good subjects shou'd buy it: And if thou't set us on our way, there's money for thee.

Aut. I have no change, master.

King. I want none, thou may'st keep it all. And now, I pray thee, without further words, which is the nearest way to the house of one *Alcon*, an aged yeoman of good repute, that lives somewhere hereabouts?

Aut. Are you going to master *Alcon's*? I'm heartily glad of it; for I shall meet you there by and by. There's to be high doings; both a sheep-shearing and a wedding: And, if that will not make sport enough for one day, I wonder at it. We shall not lack for good chear, I warrant you. And I hope to sell a parcel of my wares.

King. Dost thou believe it now, *Camillo*?

[*Apart to Camillo.*]

Cam. But pray who is to be married there?

Aut. Why young Mrs. *Perdita*, his daughter; the prettiest lass, master!—Ods life! she'll make thy old gums water when thou see'st her. When you go there, put it about that we may all kiss the bride; I long dearly to have one smack at her.

Cam. And what is he that is design'd her husband?

Aut. Why some give out he is a gentleman; but this world is so strangely given to lying, that I scarce believe a word in ten I hear to anybody's advantage; but if he were, I am sure he's nothing the better for that; for I never was acquainted with a gentleman, that is to say, to drink with him or so, that was not the saddest dog in nature: Your gentlemen are sad dogs, sad dogs, indeed! But this young man has too good a character for a gentleman: Alas! they say he has honour and honesty, and love and virtue, and all that trumpery stuff that you never meet with—in gentlemen now-a-days: But it's no matter; *Alcon* hath enough for her and him too, though he
were

were as poor, and as extravagant, as any gentleman of them all.

King. But *Alcon*, I suppose, knows, for certain, who and what he is to whom he gives his daughter.

Aut. I know not that ; 'tis none of my concern.

King. Then pray direct us thither.

Aut. Come here.—Look, you go along this foot-path, (for, if you tread in the grass, you'll have a quarter-staff over your pate) cross the stile at the end of the meadow, then wind along the river's side to where it tumbles and flounces down the rock, as white as fillabub ; then, turning to the left, mount up the rising ground, leaving the wood a little to the right, 'till, coming to a spacious lawn close nibbled by the sheep, as if 'twere shorn, straight on you may descry old *Alcon's* dwelling ; though not a fine, the warmest hereabouts.—Some business calls me now another way, but in an hour I'll be with you there.

Sings.

*Jog on, jog on the foot-path way,
And merrily bend the stile-a ;
A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad one tires in a mile-a.*

[Exit.

King. Report, *Camillo*, sometimes speaks the truth.
To-day the maid is to be wed. To whom
Is yet uncertain ; but I think there's room
For just suspicion that it is my son.
If so, th' unhappy object of his love,
Though beautiful, though perfect innocence,
Must fall a sacrifice to public good.

Who dares, like *Semele*, to meet a *Jove*,
Should justly perish by ambitious love.

[Exeunt.



A C T II.

SCENE, ALCON'S House.

The SCENE discovers ALCON, FLORIZEL, PERDITA, the KING, CAMILLO, with Shepherds and Shepherdesses.

ALCON.

WELCOME, kind neighbours, welcome, gentle strangers.

This day we dedicate to mirth and feasting.

You're welcome all: I pray you lack for nothing.

[Florizel and Perdita talk together.]

King. Cou'dst thou believe this, had not thine own eyes

[Aside to Camillo.]

Borne uncorrupted witness of the truth?

Alc. Fie, daughter! when my old wife liv'd, upon
This day, she was both pantler, butler, cook;
Both dame and servant; welcom'd all, serv'd all;
Wou'd sing her song, and dance her turn: But you
Retire, as if a feasted guest, and not
The hostess of the meeting. Pray you bid
These unknown friends to's welcome; for it is
A way to make us better friends, more known.
Come, quench your blushes, and present yourself
That which you are, mistress o' the feast. Come on,
And bid us welcome to your sheep-shearing,
As your good flocks shall prosper.

Perd. Sir's, you're welcome.

It is my father's will I should take on me
The hostessship o' th' day; you're welcome sirs.
Give me those flowers, *Dorcas*. Reverend sirs,

For

For you there's rosemary and rue ; these keep
Seeming and favour all the winter long ;
Grace and remembrance be unto you both,
And welcome to our shearing.

King. Shepherdes,

A fair one are you, well you fit our ages
With flowers of winter.

Perd. Sir, the year growing ancient,
Nor yet on summer's death, nor on the birth
Of trembling winter, the fairest flowers o' th' season
Are our carnations and streak'd gilliflowers,
Which some call nature's bastards ; of that kind
Our rustic garden's barren.—Here's for you
Hot lavender, mints, savory, marjoram.
The marygold that goes to bed with th' sun,
And with him rises weeping ; these are flowers
Of middle summer, and, I think, they are given
To men of middle age.—You're very welcome.

Cam. I could leave grazing, were I of your flock,
And only live by gazing.

Perd. Out, alas!

You'd be so lean, that blasts of *January*
Wou'd blow you through and through. Now, fairest
friend,

I wou'd I had some flowers o' th' spring, that might
Become your time of day ; and your's, and your's,
That wear upon your virgin branches yet
Your maiden blushes. O *Proserpina*,
For the flow'rs now, that, frighted, thou let'st fall
From *Dis*'s waggon! Early daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of *March* with beauty ; violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of *Juno*'s eyes,
Or *Cytherea*'s breath ; pale primroses,
That die unmarried ere they can behold
Bright *Phæbus* in his strength ; gold oxlips, and
The crown imperial ; lilies of all kinds,
That in the valley grow. O these I lack
To make you garlands of, and my sweet friend
To strew him o'er and o'er.

Flor. What, like a coarse ?

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Perd. No, like a bank for love to lie and play on;
Not like a coarſe; or if, — not to be buried
But quick, and in mine arms. Come, take your flowers;
Methink I play, as I have ſeen them do
In *Whitſund'* pastorals. — I'd make you welcome,
But fear I weary you.

Flor. What e'er you do,
Still betters what is done. When you ſpeak, ſweet,
I'd have you do ſo ever; when you ſing,
I'd have you buy and ſell ſo; ſo give alms and pray,
In ſuch ſweet notes, and, ordering your affairs,
To ſing them to; or, when you dance,
Like a ſmooth wave by gentleſt winds heav'd up,
So move you to the muſick's dulcet breath,
'That I cou'd wiſh the motion were perpetual.

Perd. O *Doricles*, your praises are too large;
I judge of them as meaſures of your love,
Not ſtandards of my own worthineſs.

King. This is the prettieſt low-born laſs, that ever
Ran on the green ſwerd; nothing ſhe does, or ſeems,
But ſmacks of ſomething greater than herſelf,
Too noble for this place. — Had *Florizel*
But thought of bedding without wedding her,
I well cou'd like his liking. [*Apart to Camillo.*]

Cam. In good ſooth,
She is the very poſy of all ſweets.

Alc. Come, come, you'd have the paſtime to your-
ſelves; [*to Florizel and Perdita.*]
But you'll find leiſure time enough hereafter
For tales of love, — The pastorals begin,
And each one bear his burthen in the ſong.

Shepherds and Shepherdesses enter and ſing.

C H O R U S,

*Let us ſing, and let us play,
Celebrate this ſhearing day.*

SHEPHERDESSES:

SHEPHERDESS.

*Our sheep timely shorn, enriching the swain,
As fresh as the morn, frisk over the plain.
So the generous mind, that with bounty o'erflows,
Feels the heart grow more light, for the good he bestows.*

PAN sings.

*Shepherds hear the voice of Pan,
God of swains, and rural peace!
I first taught the race of man
How to shear the woolly fleece:
How your shiv'ring limbs to fold,
Proofs against the winter's cold.*

King. I pray, good shepherd, what fair swain is that,
Whose happy hand is to thy daughter's link'd,
Like turtles pair'd, that never mean to part?

Alc. They call him *Doricles*. He boasts himself
To have a worthy breeding; but I have it
Upon his own report, and I believe him.
He looks like sooth. He says he loves my daughter;
I think so too; for never gaz'd the moon
On the calm ocean, as he'll stand and read
As 'twere my daughter's eyes. — And to be plain,
I think there is not half a kifs to chuse,
Which loves the other best. She e'en wou'd have him,
So let them to't. 'Twere pity cros such love,
And I've enough for both, for she shall bring him
More than he dreams of yet.

Enter a Clown.

Clown. O master! did you but hear the pedlar at the
door, you wou'd never dance again after a tabor and
pipe; no, the bag-pipe cou'd not move you. He sings
tunes faster than you can tell money. He utters them
as he had eaten ballads. — Then he hath ribbands of
all colours in the rainbow, inkles, cambrick, lawns, and

garters for the maids, and he sings them over as they were gods and goddesses. You wou'd think a smock were a she angel, he so chaunts to the sleeve-band and the work upon the gusset.

King. Admit him, he's a merry fellow.

Alc. Ay, bring him ; we're for all mirth to day.

Enter AUTOLICUS singing.

*Will you buy any tape, or lace for your cape,
My dainty duck, my dear—a ?
Any silk, any thread, any toys for your head,
Of the newest and finest fine ware—a ?
Come to the pedlar, money's a medler,
That uttereth all men's ware—a.*

Clown. What hast thou here ? ballads ?

Mops. I pray now buy some. I love a ballad or a life in print, for then one is sure they're true.

Aut. Here's one to a very doleful tune, how a usurer's wife was brought to bed of twenty money-bags at a burthen ; and how she long'd to eat adders heads and toads carbonado'd.

Mops. But is it true, think you ?

Aut. True, upon my honour. Why do you think, tho' I carry a pack, I'd carry a pack of lies about ? here's the midwife's hand to it, one *Mrs. Taleporter*, and six honest wives that were present. I myself saw five young adders creep out of her nostrils and in again at her mouth.

Dor. Bless me from marrying an usurer !

Aut. Here's another ballad of a great huge fish, with eyes like full moons, and twenty rows of teeth as long as plowshares, with a tail like a fiery dragon's, which appear'd upon the coast the 32d of *April*, new stile, breathing flames and brimstone, and vomiting out pin-cushions and love letters. It sung this very ballad against hard-hearted maids. It was thought this beautiful monster was a woman, and that she was turn'd into an horrible thornback for having pierc'd so many young men's hearts in this world by turning her back upon them,

them, and she now continues a frightful kind of an old fish, call'd a maid. Come, buy it; the ballad's a very pretty, pitiful ballad, and as true as the former.

Dorc. Come, lay it by, and shew us another.

Aut. Here's one that I'm sure must please you. It is come from *Italy*, a master-piece of humour, one of your, your, your hurly burly's, for most people like it, because they don't understand it; and the composition is no less elegant than the words. It has charm'd all the great folks in *Bitthynia*; the nicest critics never turn'd up the nose at it; 'tis in three parts, two women and a man.

Mops. Psha! this is an old one. We had it a month ago. There's scarce a maid westward, but she sings it.

Aut. Can you sing it?

Dorc. Ay, we can both sing it.

Aut. Then if you two will bear your parts, we'll sing it for the diversion of the company.

Mops. Begin then.

Sings.

I.

Ant. Get you hence, for I must go,
Where it fits not you to know.

Dorc. Whither?

Mops. O whither?

Dorc. Whither?

Aut. No, no; you must not know.

Mops. It becomes thy oath full well,
Thou to me thy secrets tell.

Dorc. Me too, let me go thither.

Aut. No, no; you shall not go.

II.

Mops. Or thou goest t' th' grange, or mill,

Dorc. If to either, thou dost ill.

Aut. Neither.

Dorc. What, neither?

Aut. Neither.

No,

No, no ; you miss your aim.

Dorc. Thou hast sworn my love to be.

*Mopf. Thou hast sworn it more to me ;
Then whither go'st ? say whither ?*

Aut. T' a place I dare not name.

[Autolicus runs out.]

Enter Clown.

Clown. O master, here's the rarest news. There are without, I believe, a dozen goat-herds, neat-herds, shepherds, and all sorts, in their holyday jackets, and every man his las in his hand ; they say they have a dance will please plentifully. There's one tight little fellow among them, that, I believe in my conscience, leaps twelve foot and a half from the ground, and he so capers and spins you in the air, you'd swear he was a shuttlecock, and the floor a racket, which, when he touches, sends him up again. Then there's the trimmest little black-ey'd wench, so brisk and so frisky, and she doth wink it and splink it at the lad, that, od's my life, I cou'd have found in my heart to have kiss'd the little jade, she look'd so. — They're all without, and only wait for leave to be admitted.

Alc. Away, we'll none of them ; here has been too much homely foolery already. — I know, fir, we weary you.

King. You weary those that refresh us. I love such gambols much ; pray let us see them.

Clown. O Sir, these are none of your common dancers at fairs and——

Alc. Leave your prating ; since these good men are pleased, let them come in.

A Dance of Shepherds and Shepherdesses.

Cam. Is it not too far gone ? 'tis time to part them.

King. No ; I will try both him, and her, and all,
To th' utmost proof, It will be time enough
T' unmask ourselves, when they begin the rites.——
I'll make the machine play.—How now, fair shepherd !
Your heart is full of something, that doth take

Your

Your mind from feasting. Sooth, when I was young
And handed love, as you do, I was wont
To load my she with knacks; I wou'd have ransack'd
The pedlar's filken treasury, and have pour'd it
To her acceptance. You have let him go,
And nothing marted with him. If your las
Interpretation shou'd abuse, and call this
Your lack of love or bounty, you were straited
For a reply at least, if you make a care
Of happy holding her.

Flor. Old sir, I know
She prizes not such trifles as these are;
The gifts she looks from me, are pack'd and lock'd
Up in my heart, which I have giv'n already,
But not deliver'd. O, hear me breathe my life
Before this ancient sir, who it should seem
Hath some time lov'd. I take thy hand, this hand
Soft as the down of *Venus'* doves, and white
As *Ethiopian's* tooth, or the fann'd snow
That's bolted by the northern blast twice o'er.

King. How prettily; youngswain, you seem to wash
The hand, was white before. — I've put you out;
But to your protestation: let me hear
What you profess.

Flor. Do, and be witness to it.

King. And this my neighbour too.

Flor. And he, and more

Than he, and men; the earth, the heav'ns, and all
The ruling planets, in their circling orbs;
That were I crown'd the most imperial monarch,
'I hereof most worthy; were I the fairest youth
That ever made eye swerve; had force and knowledge
More than was ever man's, I wou'd not prize them
Without her love; for her, employ them all,
Commend them and condemn them to her service,
Or to their own perdition.

King. Fairly offer'd,
This shews a sound affection.

Alc. But, my daughter,
Say you the like to him?

Perd. I cannot speak

22 *The SHEEP-SHEARING : or,*

So well, nothing so well, no nor mean better.
By the pattern of my own thoughts, I cut out
The purity of his.

Alc. Call in the priest.
We'll doubly crown this happy festival.

Enter Priest with AUTOLICUS officiously attending him.

And, friends unknown, you shall bear witness to it.
Observe the young man well, and note him so,
That in what garb hereafter you may see him,
Still may you paint his features in your mind,
And in remembrance bear his sacred vows.——
I give my daughter to him [*hands her to the priest*] and
will make

Her portion equal his.

Flor. O that must be
I th' virtue of thy daughter ; one being dead,
I shall have more than you can guess at yet,
Enough then for your wonder.

Aut. [*to the king.*] Master Greybeard, hark you, a
word with you ; be sure you remember to let us all
have a kiss at the bride.

King. O fear it not ; when they are marry'd you shall
kiss the bride.

Flor. Come on ; why do you now delay my bliss ?
Most holy father, do thine office now,
Before these witnesses.

Priest. My son, thine hand ;
And, daughter, thine.

King. Soft, sir, a while ; beseech you,
Have you a father ?

Flor. I have ; but what of him ?

King. Knows he of this ?

Flor. He neither does nor shall.

King. Methinks a father
Is, at the nuptials of his son, a guest
That best becomes the table Pray you once more,
Is not your father grown incapable
Of reasonable affairs ? Is he not stupid
With age, and alt'ring rheums ? Can he speak, hear,
Know

Know man from man, dispute his own estate?
Lies he not bed-rid, and again plays o'er
The follies of his child-hood?

Flor. No, good fir:
He hath his health, and ampler strength, indeed,
Than most have at his age.

King. By my white beard,
You offer him, if this be so, a wrong
Something unfilial. Reason, my son,
Shou'd chuse himself a wife; but as good reason,
The father (all whose joy is nothing else
But fair posterity) shou'd hold some counsel
In such a business.

Flor. I yield all this;
But, for some other reasons, my grave fir,
Which 'tis not fit you know, I not acquaint
My father of this business.

King. Let him know it.

Flor. He shall not.

King. Pr'ythee let him.

Flor. No, he must not.

King. Let him, my son; he shall not need to grieve
At knowing of thy choice.

Flor. Come, come, he must not.
You interrupt us, fir; no more of this,
But mark our vows.

King. Mark your divorce, young fir,
[discovering himself.

Whom son I blush to call; thou art too base
To be acknowledg'd. Thou, a scepter's heir,
That thus affect'st a sheephook! thou, old traitor,
I'm sorry that, by hanging thee, I can
But shorten thy life one week. And thou fresh piece
Of excellent witchcraft, who, of force, must know
The royal fool thou cop'st with— [Turning to Florizel.

Perd. Will't please you fir, be gone.
I told you what would come of this! beseech you
Of your own state take care. This dream of mine,
Being now awake, I'll queen it no inch farther,
But milk my ewes, and weep.

King.

King. By heav'n, he knows me, yet he blushes not.

Flor. What, blush to love! Shame light on him that does.

I glory in't; for 'tis the next approach
Of mortal souls to the divine perfection.

King. I tax not love, but thy degenerate choice.

Flor. Can you look there, and yet arraign my choice?
No; 'tis the will of heav'n she shou'd be lov'd,
And it were impious pride to contradict it.

King. Hell! death and furies! dost thou still persist?

Flor. Persist to death. — My *Perdita*, my love,
Let not affliction change that lovely cheek.
I've sworn, and will be thine till death.

King. And thou shalt keep thy vow. — *Camillo*, call
Our guards, and lead this forc'refs, and her fire,
To instant death.

Flor. I charge you, sir, forbear.

By heav'n, the first that touches her shall die.

King. Resistance is in vain. There waits without
An armed force full fifty times your strength.

Aut. O blood! I shall be hang'd too for the damn'd
lies I told him of himself.

King. For thee, fond boy, if I but see thee sigh,
We will cut off the hopes of thy succession;
Not hold thee of our blood.

Flor. From my succession wipe me; I shall be
Heir to her love, and reign within her heart.

Cam. This, sir, is madness.

Flor. Call it what you will,
To barter shew for happiness is gain.
Not for *Bithynia*, nor the pomp that may
Be thereout glean'd; for all the sun sees, or
The close earth wombs, or the profound seas hide
In unknown fathoms, will I break my faith
Plighted to this my fair, beloved bride.

Perd. You have:
I cannot answer you with aught, but tears.

Alc. Most gracious king, if thou'lt vouchsafe to hear
A wretch, whom once you honour'd with your friendship,

As did *Camillo*, hearken to *Antigonus*. [*Discovers himself.*
King.

King. Antigonus!

Cam. How risen from the dead!

King. 'Tis he indeed!

If my own senses vouch the wond'rous truth,
'Twas said thou wert devour'd by hungry wolves.

Alc. So has it been for sixteen years believ'd.

*King. Whence then this myst'ry? how cam'st thou
hither?*

*Alc. You may remember (for you bore a part
Then in Sicilia, in our sad calamities)
Leontes growing jealous of his queen,
Far gone with child, most barbarously doom'd
To be expos'd, the infant she shou'd bear.
I undertook the cruel task, through mercy,
First vowing to myself to save the babe,
And fly with it to some more peaceful shore.
Entering the wood with this determination,
I spy'd the carcass of a man, just newly
Slain, and but half devour'd by a wolf.
On this I put my cloaths, and near it strew'd
The infant's little weeds all smear'd with blood,
Which being found, and known, 'twas thought by all
That we were both devoured by wild beasts.
Then flying with my little charge, I came to seek
An hospitable shelter in Bithynia.—
How well my ward in sixteen years hath grown,
Turn there, and you may see.*

Flor. My Perdita!

*Alc. My lord, I knew that Doricles was Florizel,
Else shou'd he not
Have leave to look upon her royal beauties.
Take her, my lord.—In truth, she is a treasure
More worth than all the riches of the east:
For she's been bred, unknowing of her state,
With virtues that may well adorn a throne;
And, in herself, so sweet her disposition,
You wou'd think mercy, charity, and peace,
Came down from heav'n, and lodg'd within her breast.—
My child, my child, thou'rt now my child no more;
Yet don't forget, that once you call'd me father.*

Perd. Ne'er shalt thou meet less reverence and love
Than heretofore, but much more gratitude.

King. Since thou hast lost one father, gentlest maid,
'Tis fitting I provide thee with another.

Give me thy hand, my son; here take thy *Perdita*,
And may the gods show'r blessings on you both.

Flor. I am all transport, extacy, and rapture:
O let me fall, and kiss your royal feet.

[*Kneels to the King.*]

My lord! my father! now I'm bless'd indeed.
And you, my *Perdita*! my love! my princess!
It is too much—I sicken with delight.

Perd. That you are mine, I joy, howe'er it be;
But no less truly shou'd I joy, had you
Fall'n to my state, than that I rise to yours.

Cam. Now, to confirm thy joy, *Antigonus*,
Leontes, satisfy'd his queen was virtuous,
For many years has mourn'd his infant lost,
Depriv'd of ev'ry child. And now thy *Perdita*
Is only heiress of *Sicilia's* crown.

All. Joy, joy to *Perdita* and *Florizel*!

Aut. [*keeling to Perdita.*] O! my good lady princess,
let the joy be universal; leave not a wrinkled brow,
or cloudy face, in all the realm upon this happy day;
begin your reign with graceless acts of mercy; intreat
the good king, your worthy father-in-law, to forgive
me all the damn'd lies I told him of himself. I own I
have been a very great rogue, and deserve hanging;
but I will mend my life, and promise that I will not
never do the like no more. Oh! oh! [*Cries.*]

Perd. May I presume to sue for mercy for him?

King. He needs it not; he is a pleasant knave,
And ne'er offended us.—Be merry, sirrah.

Aut. Huzza! huzza! huzza!—[*Leaps about.*] a re-
prieve, a reprieve. But may it please your grace—he,
he, he!—I hope you don't forget your promise, he, he,
he! that when they were marry'd, I shou'd kiss the bride.

King. And so thou shalt; I'll set thee an example.

[*Kisses her.*]

Aut. [*kisses her.*] This is the first time I ever kiss'd a
princess. [*Snatches another kiss.*] And this shall be the
last.

last. By *Jupiter*, I think I feel myself inspired; and if all your majesties will give me leave, I'll sing you a song I have made extrumpery upon the occasion.

Sings.

I.

*Then let us all be blithe and gay
Upon this joyful, bridal day,
That Florizel weds Perdita.*

II.

*And let each nymph and shepherd tell,
No happy pair e'er lov'd so well,
As Perdita and Florizel.
Sing high, sing down, sing ding dong bell.*

[Exeunt Omnes.]

F I N I S.

EPILOGUE.

Spoke by Mr. KING.

OUR folk behind, because I'm a queer dog,
Insist that I shou'd speak the epilogue.
I wou'd as lieve be hang'd, as speak the nonsense
Poets now write ;—I wou'd, upon my conscience.
But, as a pedlar, I have brought my pack,
To sell you cheap, what each of you may lack :
This little box is fill'd with such a store, as
Seems the reverse directly of Pandora's.

First, to our authors, who have lately writ,
I'd recommend this pennyworth of wit ;

4 AP 54 [Shewing a penny-book.
And for our scholars, men of profound reading,
I have the last edition of good-breeding.

For criticks, I have learning, taste, and spirit,
To judge exactly of an author's merit :
For bucks, a catalogue of new coin'd oaths
Ne'er sworn before ; and spelling-books for beaux.

Here's honesty, of never-changing hue,
Though old, yet little us'd, and good as new.
Are there no lawyers here ?—they'll surely buy it ;
And yet they'd starve on such a meagre diet.

I've native blushes, modesty, and virtue,
Though scarce, yet cheap ; their price will never hurt you.
These are design'd for chamber-maids and doxies ;
I don't suppose they're wanted in the boxes :
For there 'tis known to ev'ry blooming belle,
A little rogue can make her look as well.
One ware, I hope, will all your fancies hit,
Whether in boxes, galleries, or pit,
Come, buy these tickets for KING's benefit.

k.

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